

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# Piggy Banks

Piggy banks have been around for a long time, but did you ever wonder why people thought to make their banks in the shape of a pig?

Pigs have nothing to do with money. They don't store food like a camel or a squirrel. So how did we end up using a pig as the style of a bank? Believe it or not, it happened by mistake.



During the fifteenth century, metal was very expensive. Dishes and pots were made of a type of inexpensive orange clay called pygg, which was pronounced just like pig. At this time, there weren't banks like we have today, so people would store their money at home. When people had extra coins to save, they would place them in clay jars or pots. Since the type of clay was called pygg, people referred to the jars as pygg banks. Over time this evolved into piggy banks.

After a few hundred years, people forgot that the word pygg referred to the clay the banks were made from. The English language was also changing and the word pig was more commonly used. So in the nineteenth century, when English potters began to get requests for piggy banks, they assumed their customers were asking for banks in the shape of pigs, not banks made from pygg.

Today piggy banks are made from all kinds of materials, and they also come in a variety of shapes and animals. But the term piggy bank is still used to refer to these adorable containers for loose change.

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1. What is pygg?

- a. a type of metal that was used to make banks
- b. a type of clay that was used to make dishes and pots
- c. a place to store money
- d. a pink farm animal with a snout

2. Before piggy banks were invented, where did people usually store their money at home?

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3. List two ways that piggy banks today are different from the ones that were made a few hundred years ago?

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4. Who is most responsible for making banks in the shape of pigs?

- a. pottery makers who worked with orange clay
- b. pottery makers who didn't know what pygg was
- c. customers who wanted banks with cute animal shapes
- d. bankers who wanted something to keep people's money in

5. What type of passage is this?

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|--------------------|------------|
| a. non-fiction     | b. fiction |
| c. science fiction | d. fable   |

